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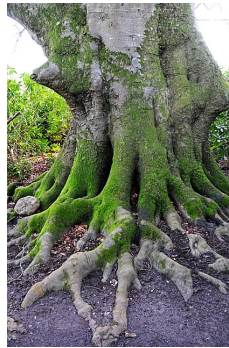
COWLITZ COUNTY

November 2018

Lichens Thrive During Our Cool,
Cloudy, Wet Winter Months

BY: Gary Fredricks

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WSU Extension

Cowlitz County

360-577-3014

1946 3rd Ave.

Longview, WA 98632



**THE THREE (AND ONLY THREE) WAYS
RETAIL BUSINESSES CAN GROW**

By: Jerry Petrick

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Mark Your Calendars

Free tire Disposal Event

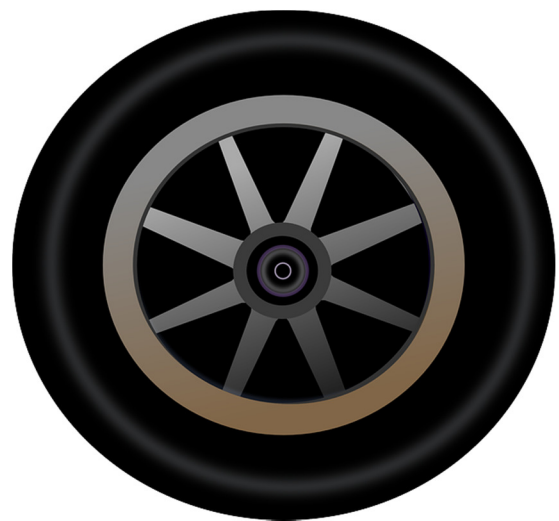
December 1st, 2018

9am to 12 pm

Cowlitz County Old Landfill

85 Frontage Road Longview, WA
98632

Questions? 360-577-3014 Ext. 3



Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of noncompliance may be reported through your local Extension office

Lichens Thrive During Our Cool, Cloudy, Wet Winter Months

It's not difficult to miss the crusty, gray colored growths that are now seen on many of our deciduous trees and shrubs. These growths are actually primitive plants called lichens. Some even contain chlorophyll and make their own food. They consist of both a fungus and an algae living in association with one another to give the appearance of a single plant.

Lichens grow on soil, trunks and branches of trees and shrubs, and on rocks. They are found nearly everywhere, particularly under the most extreme environmental conditions. The Arctic tundra for example, is dominated by lichens. They serve as an important food source for reindeer. Worldwide, some 20,000 species can be found, however they are rarely found in water.

Like algae, lichens manufacture their own food. They occur in several forms, such as crusty gray, green, yellow and white growths. Some are leaf-like, others resemble a tuft of horse hair hanging from the branches. Some people like these plants for the color they add to trees and shrubs during the winter.



Since they make their own food, they do not directly injure the plant on which they grow. Despite this, there are still good reasons why they should be controlled. They can have a "suffocating" effect on plants as well as harbor insects and also hold extra water on the plant. During a freeze, the water turns to ice and adds weight to the plant, making it more susceptible to wind damage.

One of the easiest things home gardeners can do to eliminate lichens is to simply prune infested trees and shrubs to allow better air circulation and light penetration. Pruning both shrubs and trees may be necessary. Reduce plant numbers to open up the landscape. Algae and lichens, as well as moss, often become established on slow-growing plants. Therefore, improving plant vigor by proper fertilization, watering and cultural management will help limit infestations.

Lichens Thrive During Our Cool, Cloudy, Wet Winter Months (Cont.)

In our coastal climate, these practices probably will not eliminate these epiphytic plants, but they will reduce their number and vigor.

A number of fungicides will kill algae and lichens in addition to moss. In order to use a particular fungicide, you must find the plant that you want to spray listed on the label. Since the dormant season is a good time to apply sprays for algae, moss and lichen control, follow label directions for disease control during the dormant season. During the dormant season, these fungicides are used in higher concentrations, making them more effective. They should not be used at these concentrations during the growing season because they can injure the leaves.

One dormant spray should give adequate control. However, although the spray may have effectively killed these growths, they will remain attached and visible for some time. Weathering and plant growth eventually will slough them off. The extent of the original problem, the density of the foliage and the vigor of the plant will determine whether treatments are required each year.

~ Gary Fredricks



THE THREE (AND ONLY THREE) WAYS RETAIL BUSINESSES CAN GROW

One of the most common challenges I work with businesses with is how to GROW their business. I decided to pull some thoughts together that provide some insights and encouragement to those of you looking to achieve higher sales and more financial success.

When it comes to growing a retail business there really are only three ways to grow.

You can:

- Increase the number of customers you serve.
- Increase the average transaction value.
- Increase the frequency of customer visits.

Is one of these three ways to grow any better than the others? I would argue yes. But it depends—

First, it is helpful to engage in a little analysis and self-reflection. Because knowing why you want to grow and which way you intend to grow helps you focus on the variables you can change.

Know that all growth requires change. And with change comes some degree of stress.

So let's look at the three ways to grow and some of the changes that may be required.

Growth By Number Of Customers Served

This is often the most difficult, and expensive, of the three. Think advertising. Here at the Small Business Development Center clients will often ask us, "Where should I spend money to advertise my business?" That is a loaded question. Before we start building a marketing plan and allocating budget dollars to advertising, we like to educate clients about a couple of key metrics that any business owner should know, the lifetime value of a customer and allowable cost to acquire a customer.

Let's say you own a restaurant and the average sale, or ticket, is \$50. Your average customer visits your restaurant six times per year. And they are likely to keep visiting as long as they continue to live in the area and you keep serving up delicious food with great service. Since homeowners sell on average every 7-10 years let's start there and be conservative at that.

$$\$50 \text{ per ticket} \times 6 \text{ visits per year} \times 7 \text{ years} = \$2,100$$



THE THREE (AND ONLY THREE) WAYS RETAIL BUSINESSES CAN GROW (Cont.)

If you knew that every time you minted a new customer your business would be accruing \$2,100 of sales revenue, how much would you invest to get that new customer in the door the first time?

Once you know your allowable cost to acquire a new customer you can then hold your advertising dollars accountable. If you choose this route for growth, know that additional spending is going to be needed. Because there is always a cost to growing customers. There's no free lunch (pun intended).

Growing The Average Transaction Value

From our restaurant example above, this may be as easy as training your staff on the fine art of suggestive up/cross selling. If you can get more customers opting for drinks, appetizers or desserts your ticket value goes up. Now this may not put a ton of strain on your business financially, but it does require focused effort in the form of staff training.

If you own a shoe store and all you stock is shoes you can reasonably predict how much inventory to carry. However, if you decide to add socks, insoles, shoe laces and leather conditioners as point-of-sale upsell items you now may have to increase your inventory purchasing capacity.

Once you start changing your merchandise mix with new categories that are logical extensions for your type of customers there will be economic impacts. Your balance sheet will grow as you have more inventory on hand. What will the off-set be? Remember – **balance sheets must balance!** Will you have more debt in the form of vendor financing? Or will your cash on hand go down? There will be impacts to your P&L as well. While vendors may promise to support your efforts to sell their products, beware of the hidden costs of taking on too much inventory.



THE THREE (AND ONLY THREE) WAYS RETAIL BUSINESSES CAN GROW (Cont.)

Increasing The Frequency Of Customer Visits

In today's hyper-connected world this should be easier than ever before. However, modern technology is the double-edged sword. You have countless options to connect with your fans via social media platforms while that also means that you are competing for your customers' attention with lots of others.

Back to our restaurant example. If you had the contact info: email address; home mailing address; mobile phone number (and permission to send text offers) for all of your customers do you think that by reaching out to them directly inviting them back to your restaurant that you could increase the average visit count from six times per year to seven? If you did just that, you could ***increase your revenues by 17 percent!***

There are literally hundreds of tactics that can be used under these three ways to grow a business. If you would like some help figuring out how to grow smart the SBDC is here to help.



This article was compiled using input from the WA SBDC Network by Jerry Petrick, MBA, and Certified Business Advisor with the WSU Small Business Development Center (SBDC) in Longview, WA. Jerry provides no-cost, confidential business advisory services by appointment. He can be reached via email jerry.petrick@wsbdc.org